

SMC COMPLETES BI AN RIVER CLEANUP NEARLY 88,000 TONS OF SILT AND WASTE REMOVED

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) has successfully delivered on its promise to clean up Laguna’s Biñan River in less than a year, freeing up the clogged waterway of nearly 88,000 tons of silt and solid waste that had long worsened flooding in the city of Biñan.

Completing the massive task in less than seven months, SMC’s Better Rivers PH initiative covered a 3.2-kilometer stretch of the river from the mouth of Laguna Lake near Barangay Dela Paz to downtown Barangay Poblacion — where hundreds of families had long been tormented by lingering floodwaters during the typhoon season.

“Dati po matagal bago humupa ang baha. Nitong Pasko (December 2024), may malakas na ulan pero hindi na umaakyat ang tubig dito. Yung ilang lugar na binaha, ma-

bilis nang bumababa ang tubig,” recalled Herminigildo Aguilar, 64, a councilman or kagawad in Barangay Poblacion. “Maluwag na ang ilog, mas mabilis nang umaagos ang tubig.”

[Floodwater used to linger for days. But after a heavy downpour last Christmas, water from the river did not swell into the coastal village and floodwater from the rain drained faster to the river.]

Since 2020, SMC’s Better Rivers PH program has been moving from one river system to another, restoring the natural depth and breadth of river channels in Metro Manila and Luzon at zero-cost to government. By clearing silt and garbage, the initiative has helped mitigate flooding, ease water flow, and improve water quality.

This voluntary effort by SMC reached Biñan River in August last



A total of 87,899 tons of silt and solid waste have been removed from 3.2 kilometers of Biñan River, restoring the depth, width and natural flow of this waterway draining out to Laguna Lake.

year through close coordination with Mayor Walfredo “Arman” Dimaguila, Jr., who also identified an area in Barangay Malaban as the LGU’s collection point for the extracted wastes and silt from the river.

George Total, 49, SMC’s team leader for the Biñan river cleanup, said four teams equipped with backhoes and barges were deployed to do the job. “Grabe ang basurang dumating kami dito.

Nagpulo-pulo na. Hindi kami makakain sa tabi kasi talagang mabaho. Ngayon wala ka nang maamoy,” Total said.

[When we arrived, the garbage was unimaginable — mounds

of them above water. We could not eat our meals because of the stink. Now, you won’t smell anything.]

A challenge for the cleanup crews were narrow sections of the river

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Enchanted Kingdom hypes up 30th anniversary with new ride; CEO, first Filipino to receive prestigious international award



EK EKlipse Wide Shot

Enchanted Kingdom, the first and only world-class theme park in the Philippines, officially welcomed its newest family thrill ride, EKlipse, with an enchanting and immersive launch event this March 30.

As one of EK’s inaugural gifts for their 30th anniversary this 2025, EKlipse offers an exciting new adventure for Filipinos, marking the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. Guests will enjoy the heart-pounding thrill aboard this ride with its unpredictable rotating movement and the visual illusion it creates every time its arms pass each other.

Catering even to pre-teens and teenagers, this newest attraction is

sure to foster even more shared experiences and create enchanting memories for EK’s multi-generational guests with their loved ones.

EKlipse Grand Launch

The EKlipse Grand Launch featured spectacular performances from rising P-pop group GAT, The Clash Season 6 grand champion Naya Ambi, and up-and-coming Filipino boy group AJAA.

EK’s very own P-pop group, SMS, also captivated the audience with their newly released single, Meant 2 Shine, along with their latest music, the theme song of EKlipse. This song supplements the overall experience of the new ride, as it plays throughout its entire cycle.

The enchanting celebration was graced by Santa Rosa City Vice Mayor Arnold Arcillas who joined in the symbolic unveiling of the ride marquee, together with EK President and Chairman Cesar Mario Mamon; Chief Operating Officer Cynthia Mamon; Head of Integrated Marketing, and Organization Development and Corporate Planning Nico Mamon; Eldar the Wizard; and twin princesses Victoria and Madeline.



EK President and Chairman Cesar Mario O. Mamon

When the marquee was revealed, EKlipse suddenly came to life, setting off a dazzling display of dancing lights which highlighted the ride’s visual appeal, especially at night.

Adding a magical twist to EK’s classic tradition, the night was topped off by the Sky Wizardry Fireworks Display featuring the vibrant colors of EKlipse.

As a special treat, Eldar the Wizard also extended the



EK Elipse Marquee reveal-



EK EKlipse SMS

park’s operating hours on Sunday to give the guests more chance to try the family thrill ride as well as EK’s other attractions.

The introduction of EKlipse exemplifies the

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Smartphones: Blessing or curse? Youth urged to fight disinformation

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Inclusive leadership bridges gap for women

Ayaw natin ng fake news! AGRI PARTY-LIST SLAMS NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF PHILHEALTH ‘OUTPATIENT EMERGENCY CARE BENEFIT’ PACKAGE

Senator Pia Cayetano honors women in uniform at the PNPA Women’s Month culminating ceremony



Senator Pia Cayetano led the National Women’s Month 2025 Culminating Ceremony at the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) in Silang, Cavite, reaffirming her commitment to advancing the welfare of women in her work as a Senator. In her speech, she underscored the importance of knowing one’s “why”—the driving force behind their commitment to public service. Sen. Pia also stressed the importance of gender partnership, noting that progress in law enforcement and in public service comes not just from empowering women but from men and women working together as equal partners.

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MARIWSKA members undergo another training, gear up for PGS certification

ANTIPOLO CITY, Rizal —

The DA-Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) CALABARZON conducted the second phase of “Training of Trainers on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)” on February 17-21 at MARIWSKA Integrated Farm, Brgy. San Jose, in this city.

It aimed to capacitate the 33 members of the



Marikina Watershed Kaysakat Association (MARIWSKA), a non-government organization based in Antipolo City, on the establish-

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EDITORIAL:

The frightful face of ruin

THE tragedy that befell Myanmar and Thailand, both members of the largely economic alliance Association of Southeast Asian Nations, on Friday last week has left a drape of destruction that caused stomachs churning and left survivors afloat with an unsettling feeling.

More than 1,700 people have died and more than 3,400 have been injured from the magnitude 7.7 tremor, according to the leaders of Myanmar's military government. In Thailand, at least 18 were killed.

Beyond doubt these two neighboring countries are still feeling dizzy, even as international aid has started being flown in or reaching the disaster zones by available roads from all directions.

Even those beyond the swathe of death and destruction and have been unaffected personally have been left nonplussed.

Lives have definitely instantly changed, with an ordinary day ripped up or pulled to pieces.

As some observers of tragedies have said, "there is only everything before this moment and now everything after, tragedy divides each affected life into separate parts: before and after."

We happily note the Philippines, also a member of the 57-year-old ASEAN, will be deploying today three Philippine Emergency Medical Assistance Teams to help in post-earthquake response in Myanmar and Thailand.

Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa has instructed the PEMATs to be on standby for deployment once international coordination protocols with the affected countries are complete and a request is received.

"We are continuously in touch with the office of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. for further instructions as the Philippines coordinates with its earthquake-stricken ASEAN neighbors," Herbosa said.

The World Health Organization said Sunday the Myanmar earthquake was a top-level emergency as it urgently sought \$8 million to save lives and prevent disease outbreaks over the next 30 days.

Here we see the ripple effect and the power of human life is immeasurable.

While we raise prayers for additional survivors to be retrieved and rescued from the ruins, the window of opportunity to find anyone alive is rapidly closing.

Most rescues occur within the first 24 hours after a disaster, and then survival chances drop as each day passes.

Verily, we do not have a choice when tragedy strikes others near us.

But we do have a choice about how we address its effects. And our government is there and then, ready to help ease the suffering.

MARIWSKA...

ment and operations of the PGS consistent with the Philippine National Standards for Organic Agriculture and other regulations.

The said activity is a follow-up to the training conducted last year wherein the group was trained in Module 1 and Module 2 of the PGS.

It also focused on the preparation of in-

ternal standards and manual of operations as well as a mock peer review with Bobcel Integrated Farm and MARIWSKA Integrated Farm which will form part of the core PGS Group.

"Maraming salamat po sa ATI at DA-RFO IV-A sa muling pagkakaroon ng training para sa MARIWSKA para sa

NNIC removes over 139,000 MT of silt and waste in ongoing flood mitigation at NAIA, nearby areas

New NAIA Infra Corp. (NNIC), the private operator of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), has removed a total of 139,158 metric tons of waste and silt from waterways surrounding the airport, as part of its push to address the perennial flooding problem affecting NAIA and nearby communities in Parañaque — especially during typhoon season.

The cleanup, which has covered around 3 kilometers of river channels — including portions of the Parañaque River near Barangay Tambo, Don Galo River, and Villanueva Creek near Barangay La Huerta — is part of a large-scale effort

led by NNIC, with support from San Miguel Corporation (SMC)'s Better Rivers PH cleanup teams.

The ongoing river cleanup has covered around 3 km of river channels around NAIA since NNIC took over airport operations in September.

Since taking over operations at NAIA in September 2024, NNIC has made flood mitigation a key priority. It has been clearing waterways, up-grading drainage systems, and improving the flow of rainwater around the airport. The initiative is already showing results as water drains more quickly, with less buildup during heavy rains.

NNIC has also tackled clogged storm drains and open canals along key roads around the airport — such as Domestic Road, NAIA Road, Airport Road, and Andrews Avenue — to help keep floodwaters from backing up into the airport and nearby areas.

So far, 67 manholes have been cleared and restored, with 17 manhole covers newly replaced. There are also seven new manholes newly constructed to improve drain access.

These efforts are fully funded by NNIC and SMC and carried out in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the City Government of Parañaque.

H o u s e h o l d wastes were a big portion of the 139,158 tons of silt

and debris extracted thus far by SMC's cleanup crews deployed in river channels around NAIA as part of NNIC's broader effort to mitigate flooding in the area.

To further boost flood protection, NNIC is preparing to install a modern drainage system, build flood barriers, and construct a stormwater pumping facility within the NAIA complex.

"Protecting NAIA from flooding is a long-term investment in safety and reliability," said NNIC President Ramon S. Ang. "We're putting in the infrastructure needed to keep the airport flood-free, but we also need the public's help. To everyone in the community, please don't throw garbage into streets or waterways. It all ends up in rivers and canals, blocking water flow and making floods worse. We can only succeed if we all do our part." **PR**

NFA...

need to restore NFA's powers to regulate rice retail and manage stocks more effectively," he said. Despite the amendment of the Rice Tariffication Law, NFA is still restricted from importing grains to boost stocks or directly selling rice to the public.

Looking ahead, NFA plans to purchase around 880,000 metric tons of palay in 2025 to meet the higher buffer stock requirement of 555,000 metric tons, which would cover 15 days of national rice consumption in the event of emergencies. **PR**

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doza, Jr. from the Regulatory Division, together with Ms. Soledad E. Leal of DA-ATI CALABARZON, served as resource persons throughout the program.

The group will be applying for certification under the PGS by the second semester of the year and they are hopeful that they will be included in the roster of PGS-certified groups in the country.

Smartphones...

From Page 1

Calamba City (PIA) — "Smartphones are both a blessing and a curse," a Philippine Information Agency (PIA) information officer told more than 500 youth participants at a West Philippine Sea Symposium on March 20.

PIA Laguna Information Center coordinator Christopher Heydreya used the mobile phones' duality to drive his point across.

He told young leaders, students, campus journalists, and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials that smartphones, while offering unparalleled communication and access to information, can also be a source of distraction and misinformation.

"Smartphones allow us to stay connected with our loved ones and can easily give us access to information, but they can also be addictive, making us lose track of time while scrolling through TikTok, Facebook, X, and other platforms," Heydreya said.

He noted social media's significant influence on the Philippine media landscape, serving as a primary news source for many Filipinos. While offering quick information dissemination, it also carries a high risk of spreading inaccurate information.

Heydreya urged the youth to be vigilant and verify sources before sharing content. "Before believing what we see and read, fact-checking and verifying the content is a must," he said.

He emphasized the importance of media literacy in developing critical thinking skills for online content consumption, reminding participants of their responsibility to prevent the spread of misinformation.

Heydreya clarified the term "fake news," stating that it's often misused. "News flow goes through a lot of fact-check-

ing, verification, vetting, and even grammar and sentence construction that are being considered before releasing it to different platforms." He suggested "misinformation, disinformation, or malinformation" as more accurate terms for untruthful information.

He introduced the SPOT method—Source, Purpose, Ownership, and Time—to help identify misleading content. He also warned against red flags such as newly created accounts with few followers, spelling errors on websites, poor-quality content, excessive posting, and lack of public engagement.

Heydreya encouraged responsible sharing and commenting on social media, emphasizing that while freedom of speech is a constitutional right, it has limitations. "It is not wrong to comment and share personal opinions because it is enshrined in our constitution and freedom of speech. But there is a limitation with the freedom of speech, limiting not to destroy the reputation of individuals, institutions, and also with government initiatives and programs," he said.

He directed participants to reputable government websites and social media channels, including the Philippine Communication Office, the Philippine Information Agency, and PIA Calabarzon, for verified information.

For West Philippine Sea updates, he recommended West Philippine Sea News and the Philippine Coast Guard. He also cited the National Youth Commission and the National Youth Commission in Calabarzon for youth-related programs.

The PIA underscored the vital role of media literacy in promoting government transparency regarding the West Philippine Sea and empowering youth to share online content responsibly.



LANDBANK unveils upgraded Optisaver Plus with free insurance

MANILA — LANDBANK is raising the bar for savings accounts with the launch of OptiSaver Plus—an upgraded version of its high-interest OptiSaver account—designed to help Filipinos grow their funds while enjoying free insurance coverage for greater financial security.

With tiered interest rates of up to 4% per annum, the LANDBANK OptiSaver Plus account provides depositors with free insurance coverage based on their Average Daily Balance (ADB).

Optisaver Plus account holders receive life insurance coverage

which scales with account balance tiers, rewarding higher savings with greater financial protection. Meanwhile, personal accident insurance offers additional coverage against accidents resulting in injury or loss, ensuring a safety net for depositors and their families.

Maintaining a minimum ADB of ₱50,000 qualifies depositors for either free life insurance or free personal accident insurance, while those in the highest balance tier of ₱20 million and above receive both coverages.

"With the LANDBANK OptiSaver Plus, we are empowering our

clients to achieve financial growth while securing their future. By combining the benefits of higher savings potential and built-in financial protection, we are ensuring their hard-earned money works even harder for them as they build wealth with confidence," said LANDBANK President and CEO Lynette V. Ortiz.

As a savings account, the LANDBANK OptiSaver Plus offers flexibility with no tenor, and allows account holders to unlimited deposits and withdrawals with seamless access through LANDBANK's digital banking channels for cardless

LANDBANK Visa Debit Card transactions and at all LANDBANK Branches for passbook over-the-counter transactions.

Interested clients can open an OptiSaver Plus account at any LANDBANK branch and receive a passbook for account monitoring.

Meanwhile, existing OptiSaver account holders who wish to avail of the free insurance coverage may visit their LANDBANK branch of account to complete the necessary forms. Account holders will also receive the forms via email from their branch of account. (**LANDBANK**)

CITY GOVERNMENT OF BACOR AND GOLDEN ARCHES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PARTNER TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Bacoar City, March 31, 2025 - The City Government of Bacoar, through the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) led by Dr. Abraham "BOB" de Castro, Atty. Venus de Castro (OSCA Head), and representatives from Golden Arches Development Corporation, including Mr. Timothy Bernardino (HR Business Partner), Ms. Josephine Mendoza (HR Business Partner), Ms. Marie Shie-la Abril (HR Manager for

ployment opportunities for senior citizens in the city.

The MOA was signed by Mayor Strike B. Revilla, Dr. Abraham "BOB" de Castro, Atty. Venus de Castro (OSCA Head), and representatives from Golden Arches Development Corporation, including Mr. Timothy Bernardino (HR Business Partner), Ms. Josephine Mendoza (HR Business Partner), Ms. Marie Shie-la Abril (HR Manager for

the South Region), Ms. Jen Narvadez (Operations Manager), Mr. Edwin Abril (Operations Manager), Mr. Austin Torres (Public Affairs Senior Manager), and Ms. Meryl Adiel T. Hernandez (Assistant Vice President - Corporate Relations & Impact). The signing ceremony was also attended by Sangguniang Panglungsod members led by Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista Mendiola and Team Revilla.

This partnership is a testament to the shared commitment of the City Government of Bacoar and Golden Arches Development Corporation to promoting inclusivity and providing opportunities for all members of the community. Through this initiative, senior citizens will have access to meaningful employment opportunities, contributing to their economic well-being and overall quality of life.

NFA boosts rice buffer stocks, cuts deficit in 2024 amid challenges

The National Food Authority (NFA), a government agency under the Department of Agriculture, made significant strides in 2024, achieving its highest rice buffer stocks in years, improving its operations, and significantly reducing its deficit despite facing challenges stemming from a leadership change and an ongoing Ombudsman investigation.

In the wake of an Ombudsman probe that resulted in the suspension of 139 NFA officials and employees, the agency struggled to compete with private rice traders in purchasing palay. However, the NFA Council, led by Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., appointed Larry Lacson as the new NFA administrator and raised the procurement price for palay from a range of P16 to

P23 per kilo to P17 to P30 per kilo. This decision was pivotal in attracting more rice farmers to sell their produce to NFA, setting the stage for a dramatic increase in buffer stocks.

As of February 2025, NFA's total palay inventory stood at 399,701 metric tons (nearly 8 million bags), sufficient to cover eight days of supply. This marked a significant improvement from just one day of buffer stock prior to Administrator Lacson's leadership.

In addition to the buffer stock boost, NFA undertook measures to modernize its supply chain. A key component of this modernization is the Masagana Agri-Food Infrastructure Modernization Program (MAFIM), a multibillion-peso nationwide initiative to build new post-harvest facilities.

MAFIM is ex-

pected to minimize annual wastage by approximately P10 billion, benefiting both farmers and consumers. MAFIM is part of the legacy project of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr and Sec. Tiu Laurel.

On the financial front, NFA successfully avoided an estimated P631 million in expenses in 2024 through strategic measures, including the incorporation of the

Buffer Stock Incentive (BSI) for farmers under the PRICERS program. The agency also implemented a "less movement" policy for rice stocks, reducing logistical costs and saving an additional P172.3 million. These cost-cutting measures helped reduce NFA's deficit, which dropped from P6.097 billion in 2023 to P3.753 billion in 2024.

The NFA also focused on strengthening

its workforce, with 543 personnel appointments signed as part of an ongoing restructuring. These appointments aim to improve employee morale, productivity, and overall efficiency.

Regulatory reforms introduced by NFA further streamlined operations. A fast-lane service for small farmers selling fewer than 50 bags of palay reduced waiting times, while the agency eliminated the re-bagging of 20 percent of its total palay procurement, which is expected to save around P215.4 million in operational costs in the coming year.

NFA plans to procure 90 new trucks in 2025, with an additional 150 trucks scheduled for 2026. These efforts will help address logistical challenges and ensure

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# BPI boosts farm output, helps open new markets, stamp smuggling in 2024

The Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) made significant strides in 2024, distributing over 54 tons of vegetable seeds to support local production, blacklisting 18 importers to safeguard human and plant health, and facilitating the opening of new international markets for Philippine fruits.

In his annual accomplishment report to Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., BPI Ex-ecutive Director Glen Panganiban highlighted the agency's key achievements, which included extensive anti-smuggling operations. These operations intercepted hundreds of tons of illegally shipped agricultural commodities, including onions, carrots, mushrooms, and tomatoes. BPI also conducted more than half a million first and second border inspections, significantly surpassing internal targets.

"A total of 515,375 first border inspections and 28,000 second border inspections were conducted in 2024, reaching 199 percent and 206 percent of our targets, respectively," said Panganiban. "We also confiscated 1,958 non-compliant consignments, mostly intercepted at NAIA. A notable confiscation included 5,640 Phalaenopsis orchids infected with the Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus, which could cause severe damage to economically important crops," he added.

Panganiban also reported that BPI blacklisted 18 importers in 2024, the highest number for a single year, exceeding the total number blacklisted over the past decade. The violations involved misdeclarations, failure to obtain sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances, and other regulatory breaches.

Secretary Tiu Laurel praised BPI's efforts, emphasizing their

role in fostering food safety, preventing the entry and spread of plant diseases, ensuring Philippine agricultural exports meet international standards while contributing to the government's food security initiatives. He also noted that BPI's efforts help stabilize agricultural prices by ensuring the production of high-quality seeds and planting materials.

"BPI distributed 28,960.88 kilograms of vegetable seeds, 21,000 kilograms of white potato, and 6,557.3 kilograms of legumes to 857 individuals and 225 groups to improve crop yields and enhance food security," said Secretary Tiu Laurel. "Additionally, the Bureau provided 776,721 planting materials to 520 individuals and 597 groups, ensuring access to quality resources for sustainable farming practices."

BPI issued last year a total of 93,727 SPS Import Clearances (SPSICs) for products like orchids and rice, with imports reaching over 5.2 million metric tons of plant products. The Bureau also issued 82,855 export certificates for items such as bananas, pineapples, and coconuts, ensuring they met international food safety standards.

BPI also played a crucial role in expanding market access for Philippine agricultural products. The bureau helped ensure the quality of the first shipment of Hass avocados to Japan, as well as exports of fresh durian to Malaysia, frozen durian to China and New Zealand, pomelo to Poland, and mangoes to Lebanon. (30)

In partnership with DA-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service, BPI launched Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) at its Malate compound. The initiative generated P8.3 million in total sales, including P2.8 million from rice sales, benefiting approximately 1,000 individuals weekly.

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-versus-

Foreclosure No. 2025-20

For: Extra-Judicial Foreclosure of  
Real Estate Mortgage

LUCILA A. MANLUCOT married to  
REYGAN B. MANLUCOT,  
Mortgagors.

x-----x

## NOTICE OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE

Upon Extra-Judicial Petition for Sale under Act 3135 as Amended by Act 4118 filed by the mortgagee, **HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND (otherwise known as Pag-IBIG Fund)**, at The Petron Mega Plaza Bldg., No. 358 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City, and against the mortgagors, **LUCILA A. MANLUCOT married to REYGAN B. MANLUCOT** at 2447 Lakandula St., Sta. Clara, Pasay City and Lot 2, Blk. 17 Aragon @ Bellazona, Brgy. Molino, Bacoor, Cavite, to satisfy the mortgage indebtedness which as of January 20, 2025, amounts to **NINE HUNDRED FIFTY FOUR THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED SEVENTY FOUR PESOS & 90/100 (P954,974.90)**, Philippine Currency, inclusive of interest, and penalty charges but exclusive of other fees incident to this foreclosure, the undersigned or her duly authorized representative will sell at the public auction on **April 22, 2025 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning** or soon thereafter, at the main entrance of the Hall of Justice of Bacoor City, Cavite, to the highest bidder for CASH and in Philippine Currency, the following described property with all the improvements thereon, to wit:

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF  
TITLE NO. 057-2017020481

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"All sealed bid must be submitted to the undersigned on the above stated time and date"

"In the event the public auction should not take place on the said date, it shall be held on April 29, 2025, without further notice"

Prospective buyers or bidders are hereby enjoined to investigate for themselves the title to the said property and encumbrances, if any there be.

City of Bacoor, March 3, 2025

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REYGAN B. MANLUCOT  
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**Dateline Weekly Newspapers:**  
March 31, April 07 & 14. 2025

# Go Negosyo's 3M On Wheels Brings Free Entrep Event to Bacoor



**YES, CAVITE MSMEs CAN! Cavite-based MSMEs were out in droves as Go Negosyo's popular 3M on Wheels free entrepreneurship mentoring event made its stop in Bacoor, Cavite last March 22, 2025. "There has always been a dynamic entrepreneurship scene in this part of the country," said Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion as he thanked the hundreds of active and aspiring entrepreneurs from this town south of the National Capital Region who flocked to the Event Center of SM City Molino.**

Bacoor Mayor Strike Revilla sent his message of support through City Government Department Head Katrina Sanchez of the Local Economic Development and Investment Promotions Office. The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)—Bacoor was in all-out support, headed by its Vice President, Gloria Silva.

Leading the entrepreneurs in Go Negosyo's signature thumbs-up is Transform Philippines CEO and event host Jordan Patente. Also in photo is content creator and Petite Bakery owner Bianca Pauline Mina, who shared how entrepreneurs can become their brand influencers. Philippine Commission on Women's Rosemarie Rafael and PCCI's Yolly Dela Cruz joined 45 other volunteer-mentors to help advise the MSMEs on how to scale up their businesses. **PR**

# BPI boosts farm output, helps open new markets, stamp smuggling in 2024

BPI's Plant Variety Protection Office (PVPO) issued plant variety protection certificates to 13 yellow corn varieties and one kiwi variety, further enhancing the Philippines' agricultural diversity. The PVPO also established an inventory system for locally bred varieties and developed a registry to improve transparency and strengthen partnerships with farming communities.

This robust series of initiatives underscores BPI's continued commitment to improving agricultural production, combating illegal trade, and fostering sustainable practices across the country. **PR**

# SM Supermalls Heats Up Summer with Sports Fun!



Players enjoy an exciting game of pickleball at SM City Cabanatuan, showcasing skill, fun, and friendly competition.



Gamers come together for an exciting and action-packed Valorant tournament at SM Megamall's Cyberzone.



[Collage] Let your furry friends dive into summer fun – join the exciting Pet Olympics at SM Supermalls!



Runners sprint forward the starting line at the SM Active Hub running activation at SM City Butuan

From sunrise to sunset, MOA Sky is the ultimate playground for everyone. Sun's out, fun's in! SM Supermalls is turning up the heat with back-to-back festivities that will make this summer season the most unforgettable one yet. From April 1 to May 31, SM Supermalls is bringing the thrill of sports to you with a lineup of adrenaline-pumping activities for all ages. So, lace up your sneakers and get into summer sports as SM Supermalls transforms into a vibrant hub of energy, non-stop fun, and surprises this summer.

## Active Hub

Gather your family and friends and take them to the largest playground for sports enthusiasts – SM Active Hub! SM Supermalls' comprehensive sports program is open to all and features 44 pickleball courts across 21 malls and 14 malls with running hubs nationwide, and counting. Just download the SM Malls Online app and become a member today! Year-round deals and perks from partner brands and discounts on sporting events await.

Join the largest sports revolution in the Philippines—download the SM Malls Online app



Runners fuel their passion for the sport as they hit their stride at SM City Clark's running event



Cyclists enjoying a smooth ride at SM City Clark

Summer Pet Olympics takes the spotlight with adorable and exciting competitions. A collaborative effort with SM Super Pets Club, this event features races, obstacle courses, and pet-friendly contests designed to showcase agility, obedience, and fun!

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# SMC...

er in the city proper where barges carrying the backhoes could not maneuver, so cranes had to make a tight entry through the city to reach the riverbanks, Total said.

Upon completion last February 28, the SMC initiative removed a total of 87,899 tons of silt and garbage from the Biñan River through a winding stretch of 3.2 km. The largest volume removed was at the mouth of the river in Laguna Lake, where the natural river channel was practically blocked going out to the lake.

"I am very happy that our river cleanup initiative marked another achievement in Laguna, through the help and cooperation of the local government and our other partners," said SMC Chairman and CEO Ramon S. Ang.

"I ask all our kababayans to please help take care of our rivers because they are critical to our health and the health of our environment, economy, and communities. The job of making our rivers better is not just the government's or the private sector's responsibility. What happens to our rivers affects us all, so we all have



AGRI...

AGRI Party-list Rep. Manoy Wilbert Lee criticized PhilHealth for not implementing its Out-patient Emergency Care Benefit (OECB), which took effect in January 2024. The package, covering outpatient services like diagnostic tests and emergency treatments, should not require hospital admission.

Lee revealed that despite official announcements, hospitals are not honoring the benefit, leaving patients with zero PhilHealth coverage for emergency room expenses. He called for immediate

action, stressing the importance of fulfilling PhilHealth's promises to ease the burden on members.

AGRI urges PhilHealth to swiftly address the issue and ensure the effective rollout of OECB, highlighting the need for accessible health benefits for all Filipinos.

AGRI Party-list Rep. Manoy Wilbert Lee blasted the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation amid complaints of patients over the failure to implement PhilHealth's Outpatient Emergency Care Benefit (OECB) package.

The OECB package, which took effect in January this year under PhilHealth Circular No. 2024-0033, covers all outpatient services and commodities provided in PhilHealth-accredited healthcare facilities—rendered at the Emergency Department and its extension facilities—including services given before a patient's arrival, during transport to a health facility, diagnostic tests such as X-ray, MRI, CT Scan and other essential emergency services and medicines.

According to the said PhilHealth Circular,

this much needed benefit package do not require hospital admission or confinement.

"Ayaw natin ng fake news lalo na sa serbisyong pangkalusugan. Hindi natin dapat paasahin sa mga benepisyo ang ating mga kababayan na matagal nang pinagkaitan ng serbisyo na deserve at karapatan nilang matanggap lalo na kung kaya namang ibigay ng PhilHealth sa bilyon-bilyong pondo na meron sila," Lee said.

The Bicolano lawmaker revealed that he wrote a letter to PhilHealth

Acting President and Officer-in-Charge Dr. Edwin Mercado on March 23 to seek clarification on the matter.

In the said letter, Lee cited two billing statements from two hospitals where PhilHealth coverage for the emergency room expenses of two different patients was zero, reflecting that the benefit package has not been honored or implemented.

"It is regrettable and unacceptable that despite the official announcement of PhilHealth, this 'outpatient emergency care service' is neither operational nor available to PhilHealth members in several, if not all hospital across the country," the solon pointed out.

"Time is of the essence on this matter. As time progresses without addressing this issue, every PhilHealth member rushed to every emergency room is burdened with the additional cost to pay," he added.

AGRI Party-list which is running for reelection in the 2025 National and Local elections under-scored the importance of addressing this issue the soonest possible time. It urged PhilHealth to update on the status of the outpatient emergency care benefit package and ensure its swift and effective implementation, saying, "It is imperative that the PhilHealth management takes immediate responsibility and addresses this critical issue without further delay."

"Seryoso tayo sa layunin nating libreng gamot at pagpapagamot

para sa bawat Pilipino para mabawasan ang kanilang araw-araw na pasanin at pangamba. Kaya kung ano ang ipinangakong dagdag na serbisyong pangkalusugan, dapat tuparin at maram-daman ng bawat miyembro at mga benepisaryo," AGRI Party-list said.

"Filipinos deserve better, so we must demand better services. Noon pa po natin ipinapanawagan at ipinaglalan, at kamakailan sa oral arguments ukol sa paglipat ng pondo sa PhilHealth, ay sinang-ayunan din ng mga Mahistrado sa Korte Suprema na dapat gamitin ang bilyon-bilyong pondo sa kalusugan para sa kalusugan kesa mga proyektong wala naman mamamatay kung hindi gawin," it added.

AGRI Party-list, under Lee's leadership, was the first to expose that PhilHealth has billions of available funds in September 2023. Lee's persistent efforts resulted to the implementation of PhilHealth's increased benefits and free medical services.

The said increases include the 30% increase in health benefits which was implemented on February 2024, another 50% increase which started in 2025, free dialysis, free eye check-up and pre-scription glasses for ages 0-15, free dental care, expanded coverage for breast cancer treatment, new benefit package for kidney transplant and heart ailments, and the said outpatient emergency care services, among others. **PR**

SMC...

Overall, Better Rivers PH has covered a total of 157.29 km of waterways, removing a total of 8,248,254 metric tons of silt and solid waste as of March 12, 2025.

This includes 1.12 tons from 10.9 km of Tullahan River; 1.18 tons from 26 km of Pasig River; 322,739 tons from 7.61 km of San Juan River; 694,372 tons from 26.3 km of Pampanga River; and 4.13 tons from 74.75 km of the Bulacan River System.

Meanwhile, its ongoing efforts to rehabilitate rivers in Paranaque City and clear flood drains around the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) have so far covered 2.58 km and removed 129,862 tons of silt and solid waste.

Ang stressed that all these efforts would be for naught if coastal communities and other stakeholders do not refrain from throwing their trash into the rivers and on roads where they are washed away to the storm drains leading to the creeks and rivers. "Hopefully, we Filipinos adhere to strict rules in the disposal of our garbage. Let us help one another so that our trash no longer ends up in our rivers." **PR**



RPVARA expected to fast-track major infrastructure projects -Gatchalian

Senator Win Gatchalian said the Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Act (RPVARA), which establishes uniform valuation standards for real estate, is expected to expedite the development of infrastructure projects necessary to underpin economic growth.

"Because RPVARA facilitates a standard valuation of real estate property, it would now be much easier to resolve right-of-way issues which are usually the main cause of delay in the progress of infrastructure projects," said Gatchalian, noting that major infrastructure projects usually require land use, land acquisition for the project site, or right-of-way acquisition. Gatchalian is the main author and sponsor of Republic Act 12001, or RPVARA which was enacted in June last year.

The senator explained that RPVARA mandates the use of the schedule of market values (SMV) as the only basis for determining the valuation of the government's real properties, which essentially simplified the process of resolving right-of-way concerns. Prior to the enactment of RPVARA, the valuation of real properties was made on the basis of either the current market values from recent sales of property in the vicinity, the schedule of zonal values as determined by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, or the SMV.

Further, RPVARA centralized the government's property valuation system under the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF), providing for the development of property valuation standards based on international valuation standards.

"Wala nang dahilan pa para maantala ang mga pangunahing proyekto sa imprastraktura na kailangan para mapalago ang ekonomiya at mapabuti ang kalidad ng buhay ng ating mga kababayan," he added.

ERRATUM

This is to correct the error made in the publication of NOTICE OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL SALE filed by BDO UNIBANK INC. versus AURORA F. ECLAR; Gemma E. Marinas, signing as atty-in-Fact, of Aurora F. Eclar published in Dateline Weekly Newspapers dated Aug. 19, 26 & Sep. 2, 2024. In the tech. terms, 15th line BLOCK 26 should be removed and not as published.

Dateline Weekly Newspapers: April 7, 2025

DEED OF EXTRAJUDICIAL SETTLEMENT WITH DEED OF ABSOLUTE SALE

Notice is hereby given that the estate comprising a parcel of land located at Bo. Buenavista, Municipality of General Trias, Cavite, covered by Transfer Certificate of Title no. T-202219 registered under the name of the deceased Spouses FORTUNATO CAMUIN and ANITA CAMUIN, who died on JULY 30, 1992 and OCTOBER 12, 1995, respectively at Las Piñas, Metro Manila, has been extra-judicially settled among the Heirs of late Spouses FORTUNATO CAMUIN and ANITA CAMUIN in equal shares pro indiviso, and thereafter sold, ceded, transferred conveyed, by way of Absolute Sale, in favor of Spouses MICHELLE CERIALES ONG and ROLLY ONG, per deed executed on FEBRUARY 24, 2025 at General Trias City, Cavite before Notary Public Atty. Christopher P. Columna, per Doc. No. 521; Page No. 106; Book No. 117; Series of 2025.

Dateline Weekly Newspapers: Mar. 24, 31 & Apr. 7, 2025

Inclusive...

Gender-responsive budgeting practices have paved the way for more inclusive programs and services in the City of General Trias, Cavite.

Ann Ferrer, head of the General Trias City Women's Development Council and founding chair-person of the Cavite Council of Women, highlighted the role of local government units in creating programs to address women's issues such as health services and economic opportunities.

"It became my priority to focus on women's [welfare] because, as a woman and a wife, I am aware of their concerns. Part of our advocacy in working on behalf of our spouses is helping our kababayans and forwarding their concerns to the local government," Ferrer shared.

According to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), empowering women and girls to participate in policymaking and decision-making provides an avenue for women's groups and civil society actors to participate in governance and perform

gender-responsive budgeting and monitoring the outcomes of such budgets.

Since its establishment in 2011, the Cavite Council of Women has become a platform for women to deliver gender-responsive government programs, ranging from livelihood training to health caravans.

Its primary goal is to provide health services for women in the province's eight cities and 16 municipalities, providing their expertise in advising local government units in utilizing their funds for creating gender-responsive programs and services.

The Cavite Council of Women also launched the Buntis Congress in General Trias City, which provides health check-ups to expectant mothers with no financial capacity to seek pre-natal consultations.

"Most of them are young girls who are not yet ready to become mothers. So we give them semi-nars and free health services, like ultrasound and free medicines and vitamins for the mommies."

Through the Council, Caviteño women are lobbying for the

provincial government to allocate funds for gender-responsive livelihood programs.

The Women's Budget, a Gender and Development (GAD) policy introduced through the Gen-eral Appropriations Act (GAA) in 1995, aimed to support gender-focused programs and projects by directing government agencies and local government units to allocate a minimum of five per-cent (5%) of its annual budget for GAD programs, projects, and activities.

"We get our allocation as part of the Gender and Development [fund]. Not all five percent, but we are included. When our proposed projects which are part of the Programs, Projects, and Activities under the GAD fund are approved by the city government, we can create more programs for women."

A homemaker herself, Ferrer understood women's dedication to becoming nurturing mothers and wives for their families.

"We do so much that we neglect ourselves. We come last in our own priorities that we neglect ourselves because we

want to provide everything to our family, to our husband. Those are our priorities as women."

As the basic unit of governance, the Women's Development Council mobilized the barangays to extend their services to the grassroots communities by designating coordinators for each barangay to represent their communities in meetings and discussions on the city's much-needed GAD programs.

"We also conduct monthly meetings to discuss the projects we can share with our neighbors [cities and municipalities] that they can replicate. Those that brought positive changes in their municipalities can be replicated in other areas."

Local government units are instrumental in providing women with access to economic opportunities, regardless if they are careerwomen or homemakers. With ample legislation and support from civil society groups, women can make their voices heard, opening doors to opportunities and services they need.

Red Horse Beer's Pambansang Muziklaban Returns with a Bang, Crowns New Rock Champions

Red Horse Beer's Pambansang Muziklaban lit up the stage in Sta. Rosa, Laguna last Saturday with shattering sets and rambling riffs in search for the next best Filipino band.

Showcasing local rock acts, the world's No. 1 strong beer hit hard and heavy by bringing back the country's top rock competition after a four-year hiatus.

The scene at the grounds of Paseo de Sta. Rosa was a culmination of a year-long competition that started in 2024 with preliminaries to determine who gets to represent the different regions for this nationwide battle of the bands.

The 12 bands that took the stage competed in two different categories – LAKAS, which bannered hardcore rock bands, and AKLAS which featured band that play alternative rock.

After hammer-

ing hardcore hits, Daks Not Dead from Batangas came out on top of the LAKAS category, while Interstate from Cebu bested the AKLAS field.

Both bands took home Php500,000 cash prize from Red Horse Beer.

"Hindi parin kami makapaniwala dahil 'yung mga nakasabay namin na mga competitors, napakagagaling. Hindi talaga namin in-expect," shares the AKLAS champion Interstate's bassist Mark Brian Nebрил.

Together with his bandmates Ly Unabia on vocals, Christian Patutol on guitars, and Adrienne Batiquin on drums, Nebрил admits that their preparation leading to the Pambansang Muziklaban Finals was all out.

"Mental at physical 'yung preparation namin during practice at studio time. Kinailangan talaga ng disiplina at determination," he says.

LAKAS champi-

on Daks Not Dead, on the other hand, shares that the mentorship they went through prior to the Pambansang Muziklaban Finals from Red Horse Beer evangelist bands took them over the top. "Malaki ang naitulong ng mga mentors namin. Lahat ng mga advice na binigay nila, sinunod lang namin para maging 100% todo 'yung maipapakita namin sa entablado ng Red Horse Beer," says vocalist Mat Piamonte.

With fellow members Rudolf Aboloc on guitars, Ben Avelino on bass, and Ian Carreon on drums, Piamonte shares that their band still has a long way to go but is thankful to their supporters as well as the competition's organizers.

"Ngayong nanalo na kami, tuloy-tuloy lang ang abante at pag produce ng kanta. Sa lahat ng sumuporta sa amin, salamat. At salamat sa Pambansang Muziklaban at sa Red Horse Beer, the

No.1 strong beer in the world."

The thousands of rakistas that showed up to see the Red Horse Beer Pambansang Muziklaban Grand Finals also saw rocking performances from top local bands including Wilabaliw, Chicosci, Greyhoundz, Razorback, and Dilaw.

Previous Pambansang Muziklaban champions also took the stage as 2018 AKLAS Grand Champion Happy Three Friends played a striking set while 2004 Grand Champion Mayonnaise closed out the night giving the crowd a performance to remember.

Astig ka ba 'dre? I-check ang details ng mga promo at abangan ang updates sa Red Horse Beer Muziklaban Facebook page (www.facebook.com redhorsebeermuziklaban). Rak on!

SSS welcomes new DICT Secretary; talks about enhanced collaboration on computing technologies and digitalization

Social Security System (SSS) President and CEO Robert Joseph Montes De Claro (right) warmly received Secretary Henry Rhoel Aguda (left), the newly appointed Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), during a courtesy visit last 26 March 2025 at the SSS Main Office in

Quezon City to discuss a broad range of partnership opportunities between the two government institutions.

De Claro said that SSS is excited to work with the new DICT Chief on multiple fronts, specifically discussing information technology standards and cloud/edge computing technologies in a dynamic



environment and how these can be leveraged to improve services to SSS members.

"Through our strengthened partnership with DICT, Secretary Aguda can guide SSS as we navigate our way through the fast-changing IT landscape," De Claro explained.

For his part, Secretary Aguda outlined priorities to improve government services to constituents. "We will promote changes to reduce queues in availing government services by pushing interconnectivity in a secure environment," Aguda said.

The meeting between De Claro and Aguda signals a rejuvenated commitment to collaborate on digitalization and modernization efforts aimed at improving SSS online services and fostering greater efficiency in the delivery of social security benefits to its millions of SSS members, especially Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) for whom De Claro vows to provide even better social security protection. **PR**

DTI and RCBC Strengthen Consumer Protection with Timbangan ng Bayan Launch in Pakil, Laguna



Pakil, Laguna – To uphold consumer rights and promote fair trade practices, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in partnership with Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC), officially launched the "Timbangan ng Bayan" in Pakil, Laguna, on February 18, 2025. The event held at the New Government Center, Tavera, Pakil, Laguna, featured a ceremonial acknowledgment and undertaking signing, launching and ribbon-cutting to mark the initiative's official implementation.

The Timbangan ng Bayan project aims to equip public markets with

accessible and accurate weighing scales, allowing consumers to verify product weights and protect themselves from unfair trade practices. This initiative primarily benefits 4th, 5th, and 6th class municipalities across the Philippines, reinforcing DTI's commitment to consumer protection and fair business transactions.

Present at the said ceremony were DTI Laguna Provincial Director Christian Ted O. Tungohan, Consumer Protection Division Chief Maria Clara B. Conopio, Trade and Industry Development Specialist Marites V. Pantua, and Senior Business

Counsellor Andrea Mae I. Macuha. They were joined by Pakil Municipal Mayor Vincent L. Soriano, Municipal Treasurer Cecilia R. Garcia, and Supply Officer II/Designated License Inspector II Don Kelly A. Fernandez, all of whom expressed their strong support for consumer empowerment and ethical business practices in local communities.

Through this partnership, DTI and RCBC continue to champion transparency and fairness in trade, ensuring that every consumer gets what they rightfully pay for (AIMacuha, DTI-Laguna).